

Frequently Asked Questions



How do I pay for the onsite health screenings provided by the Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa (VNS)? (08/04/2010)

You can pay for the onsite health screenings by cash or check. VNS cannot accept credit cards.

Do I need to participate in an onsite health screening to take the PHA? (08/04/2010)

No, if you or your spouse has received a physical within the last 12 months and you have the biometric information required for the PHA, you do not need to participate in one of the scheduled health screenings.

Will there be onsite health screenings outside the Des Moines area? (08/04/2010)

VNS is finalizing the schedule for sites outside the Des Moines area. The [schedule of dates/times/locations](#) is updated regularly so check back often to see if an onsite screening will be available at or near your location.

What is biometric information? (08/04/2010)

The biometric information that is needed for the PHA includes your height, weight, cholesterol levels, glucose levels and blood pressure.

What is the cost for the finger stick at the onsite health screenings? (08/02/2010)

The price for the finger stick during the campaign (August 2 – September 30, 2010), at the onsite health screenings provided by the Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa, is \$10.00. You **cannot** submit the \$10.00 fee to Wellmark, but you can submit it to your health flexible spending account (FSA) for reimbursement.

What is a Personal Health Assessment (PHA)?

The **Personal Health Assessment** (PHA) is a confidential questionnaire that collects information about health habits, health information, and biometric information such as cholesterol, blood pressure and glucose levels, and then assesses your readiness to make healthy changes.

Why should I take the PHA?

The PHA is a tool to help you know more about your current health status as well as potential health risks. After taking the PHA, you'll receive a snapshot of your overall health status including risk factors you may have, an explanation of how your current behaviors are impacting your health, and what steps you can take to improve your personal health. You can get help from your doctor by using the results of your PHA to start a discussion about any health concerns you may have. Based on the results of your PHA, you may want to take advantage Healthy Opportunities' health and wellness resources to set personalized goals and create an action plan specific to your lifestyle to achieve your goals.

Why is it important to the State of Iowa that I take the Personal Health Assessment (PHA)?

Good health starts with good information. That's why the State of Iowa's Administrative Services and Public Health departments encourage you to learn about their current health status, for what you are at risk, and what you can do reduce your health risks. Therefore, it is providing resources like the PHA.

How secure is the information that I provide through the PHA? Who has access to my answers?

The State of Iowa is committed to protecting your privacy and ensuring confidentiality. The State of Iowa and Wellmark consider compliance with appropriate state and federal laws, like the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, to be of the utmost importance. No information about your individual health status or responses will be shared with the State of Iowa without your specific authorization as required by law. All personal health information *is kept confidential* and *will not be shared* with anyone from the State of Iowa. The State only receives the aggregate results of the PHAs so that it can best identify the key health issues for its employees.

Frequently Asked Questions



Is completing the PHA mandatory or voluntary?

Your participation is voluntary.

Can my spouse and dependent children, who are covered by my State-sponsored health insurance plan, take the PHA?

Your spouse can take the PHA but your dependent children are not eligible to take the PHA.

Are retirees eligible to take the PHA?

Retirees are not eligible to take the PHA.

May I participate in the PHA process on work time?

You cannot take the PHA or obtain the biometric information on work time. You will need to take the PHA and biometric screenings on non-work time (before/after work, or during break and lunch periods).

What information do I need to complete the PHA?

Before completing the PHA, you and your spouse must obtain biometric information. For the PHA, you will need to know your: height, weight, blood pressure reading (diastolic and systolic blood pressure), and cholesterol reading.

Your PHA results can only be as accurate as the data you input. It is important that you answer the questions as accurately as possible so that the recommendations offered by your PHA report are relevant to your personal situation.

I don't know my biometric measurements. How do I obtain them?

There are three ways that you can obtain your biometric measurements.

- At onsite locations throughout the state, administered by the Visiting Nurses Services of Iowa.
- At your health care provider's office

When and where will the onsite health screenings be available?

The dates, times and locations of the onsite health screenings can be found at the DAS Healthy Opportunities PHA website (<http://employeeewellness.iowa.gov/pha.html>).

What if I had a routine physical recently?

If your physical was conducted within the last 12 months and you have all of the biometric information required to take the PHA, request a copy of your lab results from your physician.

How do I prepare for the onsite health screening?

- Fasting for 8 hours is recommended. Consult your physician regarding fasting if you have a chronic illness, such as diabetes, or you are pregnant.
- Drink plenty of water, so you are well hydrated prior to screening.
- Continue taking medications.
- Arrive at least 5 minutes early.
- Allow at least 20 minutes to complete the screening, including a brief consultation.

What do the examiners screen for at the onsite health screenings?

Blood pressure, total cholesterol, high density lipoproteins (HDL), low density lipoproteins (LDL), triglycerides, and glucose.

Frequently Asked Questions



How is a blood sample obtained?

Through a quick finger stick conducted by a trained medical professional.

How much time is needed to complete the PHA? Must I do it all at once?

On average, the PHA takes 20 minutes to complete. If you are unable to complete the PHA in its entirety, the information you have entered will be saved when you close the program, allowing you to complete it later.

What kind of information do I get from completing the PHA?

You will receive a personalized report. Your confidential report includes information about:

- Your current health status
- Your potential health risks
- How your current behaviors are impacting your health
- What you can do to improve your health

An e-mail will notify you when your report is available to access.